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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 NEW DELHI 000906

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STATE FOR TIBET COORDINATOR DOBRIANSKY

NSC FOR HADLEY/ABRAMS

H PASS TO SPEAKER PELOSI, REPRESENTATIVES MARKEY,
MCDERMOTT, MILLER, SENSENBRENNER, INSLEE, HOLMES-NORTON,
SOLIS, ESHOO AND HOLT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/28/2018

TAGS: PHUM PREF PREL CVIS CH IN

SUBJECT: DALAI LAMA FEARS INFLUX OF HAN CHINESE WILL WIPE
OUT TIBETAN BUDDHIST CULTURE

REF: A. NEW DELHI 850

¶B. NEW DELHI 882

¶C. 07 NEW DELHI 4125

Classified By: AMBASSADOR DAVID C. MULFORD FOR REASONS 1.4 (B AND D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During a March 28 meeting with the Ambassador, His Holiness the Dalai Lama sketched out two scenarios for Tibet: a positive scenario, where the PRC agrees to dialogue and permits a degree of Tibetan autonomy; and a negative scenario, where the PRC continues to flood Tibet with ethnic Han Chinese and wipes out Tibet's distinctive Buddhist culture by reducing the Tibetan population to an insignificant minority. He praised India for its 50 years of support for Tibetan refugees, hosting Tibet's government-in-exile, and educating Tibetans in India about their religion, language and culture. He also amplified his request to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (Ref A) for the U.S. to accept Tibetan refugees, either from Nepal or from the overcrowded refugee camps in India. Describing his April 12-22 trip to Seattle, Ann Arbor and Hamilton, NY, the Dalai Lama suggested he might seek a meeting with the President. After submitting to fingerprinting for his U.S. visa in the privacy of the Roosevelt House, the Dalai Lama quipped that all are equal under the law -- except the Chinese. End Summary.

TWO SCENARIOS

¶2. (C) After the Ambassador showed him a map of Tibetan demonstrations in China since March 10, His Holiness the Dalai Lama stated that the crisis had caused Chinese leaders to realize how much resentment had built up over their rule in Tibet. He outlined two scenarios, one positive and one negative. Under the first scenario, Beijing would come to understand that Tibetan nationalism and religious and cultural separatism cannot be suppressed. China's leaders would review their Tibet policy in light of ongoing protests and the realization that even if stability were restored, latent Tibetan resistance would continue to build. The crisis showed that "the entire Tibetan population is part of the 'Dalai clique,'" according to the Dalai Lama. He related a story in which an "old communist retiree" from Tibet

prostrated himself before the Dalai Lama and, with tears in his eyes, told the Dalai Lama that in 50 years he had never doubted Buddha and never doubted the Dalai Lama.

"Ninety-five percent of Tibetans feel that way," according to the Dalai Lama. Older Tibetans had become somewhat content, as they were no longer subject to daily harassment, but younger Tibetans would only continue to follow the Dalai Lama's non-violent approach as long as he remains alive. After his death, increasing desperation and frustration will lead them to violence, the Dalai Lama predicted. He expressed hope that the PRC would "take a new look" at Tibetan reality, and stressed his continuing commitment to the "Middle Way" approach. (Note: in an earlier meeting with Embassy staff reporting in Ref C, the Dalai Lama defined the "Middle Path" as a commitment not to seek independence as long as the Chinese government respects the distinctive character of the Tibetan people, permitting them to enjoy genuine regional autonomy. End note.) "My moral authority can be used to cool down resentment," the Dalai Lama declared, offering to help the Chinese government end the crisis if it permits greater autonomy. He added that the United States could help by urging the PRC to acknowledge reality in Tibet. President Hu, he continued, wants to build a society based on "harmony," but can only do so if he respects the views of individuals and resolves conflict via dialogue, not through the use of force.

¶3. (C) The Dalai Lama predicted that, if the PRC continues to suppress the Tibet uprising, temporary stability might be achieved, but another uprising will occur within ten to twenty years. He then outlined a second, negative scenario, describing the example of the Mongolian Autonomous Region, where the influx of 24 million ethnic Han Chinese have

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overwhelmed 4 million Mongolians, reducing them to an "insignificant minority." "From the Communist viewpoint," he said, "this is the best way to create stability" in regions such as Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia. By branding 6 million Tibetans in five provinces as part of the "Dalai clique," Beijing is setting the stage to dilute them to an insignificant minority, the Dalai Lama stated. He related information he had gleaned from military circles in Lhasa revealing that, after the Olympics, one million more Han Chinese will be settled in Tibet.

PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS; PROTECT BUDDHIST CULTURE

¶4. (C) The Dalai Lama described the roots of the current crisis as arising from the influx of ethnic Chinese into Tibet. Tibetans heard talk of the Dalai Lama's resignation, and bristled at Beijing's stepped-up criticism, according to the Dalai Lama. He said Tibetans realized the limitations of silence, and the hardliners recognized Beijing's strategy of reducing Tibetans to an insignificant minority. "I hope the world community will not allow this," he said, urging that "real pressure" be placed on Beijing. One million mainland Chinese have a genuine interest in Tibetan Buddhism, according to the Dalai Lama, who added that the number of Christians in China was also increasing. "The Chinese can benefit tremendously from Tibetan Buddhist culture -- if they view it holistically," he said. He added that if Beijing only views the challenge politically, and continues its short-sighted obsession with money, power and control, then it will miss an opportunity to fulfill President Hu's vision of a harmonious society.

¶5. (C) It is useful and wise, the Dalai Lama continued, to view the situation in Tibet within the broader context of human rights in China. Many Chinese retain a sense of grievance from the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, he said, and the Chinese masses must learn that Tibetans are not anti-Chinese, but rather favor greater respect for human rights and democracy. The Ambassador agreed, stating that between now and the Olympics, more attention will be paid to the

suffering of some of China's people. The Ambassador suggested that linking Tibetan concerns to broader human rights concerns is a good strategy. The Dalai Lama responded that the world should aim to bring democracy to China. "A closed society is very unpredictable," he said, "but if the biggest nation became an open society, that would really be in the world's interest." He added that, as important as it is to bring democracy to Iraq, it is doubly important to democratize China, which is armed with nuclear weapons and dangerous.

ECONOMIC CHANGE WILL HELP FOSTER POLITICAL CHANGE

¶6. (C) The Ambassador described the conflict between China's monolithic government structure and an increasingly market-based economy, which requires greater personal freedom to work effectively. "In a market economy are hidden aspects of democracy which we should encourage," he said. The Ambassador offered that the President plans to attend the Olympics in order to support Chinese penness, which indirectly challenges its monolithic government. The Dalai Lama replied that Tibetans are actively reminding the world of China's poor human rights record, and the world's response shows that Chinese suffering under Communist totalitarianism has not been forgotten. "That is a real conspiracy," he laughed, adding that Beijing does not know how to create a peaceful transition to democracy. He continued that China's leaders have erred by placing too much importance on ideology, citing Jiang Zemin's desire to expand Communism so that it embraced the middle class, and Hu Jintao's emphasis on a harmonious society. "Freedom and the rule of law are essential for harmony," he declared, "and it cannot be achieved through fear and terror." The Dalai Lama expressed hope that President Hu would begin a process of democratization, that would cause his name to be remembered

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forever. The U.S. can help, he concluded.

GRATEFUL TO INDIA -- AND TO THE UNITED STATES

¶7. (C) The Ambassador expressed concern about India's arrest and harsh treatment of 140 Tibetan demonstrators, half of whom remain in detention. He described Foreign Minister Mukherjee's explanation that Tibetans were welcome in India as long as they respect its laws. The Dalai Lama stressed his gratitude for U.S. expressions of concern about the right to peaceful demonstrations. He related that, at times, the GoI has taken a strict attitude toward demonstrators; however, in his view those "sad incidents" remain relatively small. "I told Tibetans who are angry at India that they must take a holistic view," the Dalai Lama said. In general, India has provided "wonderful" hospitality to Tibetans for 49 years. The Dalai Lama described Prime Minister Nehru's "guilt" after insisting on the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet in 1956. Upon the Dalai Lama's 1957 return to India, he tried to follow the principles of Gandhi's freedom struggle, but the Chinese response on Tibet was much harsher than that of the British in India. The Dalai Lama said Chinese military documents revealed that, between March 20, 1959, and September 1960, the Chinese military killed 87,000 Tibetans around Lhasa. Appalled by the scale of this tragedy, Nehru met the Dalai Lama in Mussoorie and acknowledged the tragedy that had befallen the people of Tibet. From that point forward, Nehru and the Indian government took "special care" of Tibetan refugees. The government of India took full responsibility for providing Tibetans with a modern education, which the Dalai Lama characterized as essential for preserving Tibetan life and culture. He praised India for hosting the government-in-exile for the past 49 years, and said overall the GoI adopted a "helpful attitude" with regard to the Tibetan issue.

¶8. (C) The Ambassador showed the Dalai Lama a letter the

latter had sent to President Eisenhower from Mussoorie in 1959 (emailed to SCA/INS). Thanking the Ambassador, the Dalai Lama replied that he remained "one hundred percent faithful to the U.S. as a champion of liberty and democracy."

REQUEST TO THE U.S. TO RESETTLE TIBETAN REFUGEES

¶9. (C) Acknowledging the Dalai Lama's request to Speaker Pelosi (Ref A) for U.S. refugee assistance, the Ambassador said the U.S. wants to honor its commitment to resettle the unregistered but long-term resident Tibetans in Nepal. He noted that Embassy Kathmandu told us a short-term change in the GoN's attitude as a result of intense Chinese pressure was unlikely, and he described the obstacles to resettling to the U.S. refugees who are "firmly resettled" in India. The Dalai Lama said he had also raised the matter with the U.S. Special Coordinator for Tibet, and with India's Foreign Secretary and Foreign Minister. He realized that a mutually

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agreeable solution with the Chinese would be difficult in the immediate future, but linked the refugee challenge to the critical matter of preserving Tibetan culture and identity. In addition to 100,000 refugees in India, Tibet's culture and identity was shared by many in the Himalayan Range. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh fully supports the Dalai Lama's efforts to preserve that culture in India's portion of the Himalayas. The Dalai Lama described the refugee challenge in Karnataka, where India had originally set aside 3000 acres for 3000 refugees many years ago. With new arrivals and the birth of children, that refugee population had now swelled to 10,000, with 7000 refugees having no basis for their livelihood, the Dalai Lama related. As it is difficult to ask the GoI for more land, especially when so many Indians are in need of land, the Dalai Lama had asked Canada, the U.S. and Australia about their willingness to take in additional refugees. Upon the Prime Minister's request, Indian officials had agreed to resettle refugees from India to other countries. The Dalai Lama said he had been encouraged by Speaker Pelosi and Rep. Sensenbrenner's

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willingness to work with the State Department to resolve the issue. The Ambassador suggested that, in the case of Karnataka, it might be possible to classify the 7000 newcomers to the refugee camp as not "firmly resettled," adding that those without a means of supporting themselves are extremely vulnerable and may, therefore, overcome the bar in our immigration law.

DALAI LAMA'S APRIL VISIT TO THE U.S.

¶10. (C) The Dalai Lama, who submitted to fingerprinting at the Ambassador's residence in order to obtain an extension of his U.S. visa, laughed off the Ambassador's apology. "Every one is equal under the law," he quipped, "except the Chinese!" He confirmed that he would visit Seattle, WA (April 12-15), Ann Arbor, MI (April 19-20) and Hamilton, NY (April 22). When the Ambassador asked if the Dalai Lama would ask for a meeting with the President, he grinned and replied, "To create more anger in Beijing, I may (ask to) see the President." The Ambassador urged him to keep the Embassy apprised of his plans.

MULFORD